Half Moon upgrades with Martin Audio FlexPoint

Although only a small, 220-cap venue, the Half Moon in Putney has hosted some of the biggest names in show business over the last 60-plus years. It was the venue for U2's first ever sell-out show, the place where Kate Bush first performed publicly, hosted KD Lang's debut, and has had the likes of Bo Diddley, The Who, and The Rolling Stones gracing its stage. But its sound system had been installed almost a decade previously and was nearing end of life.

The venue’s head engineer James Beck has been working at the venue all of that time and more. It was when Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason came through back in 2018 carrying Martin Audio’s MLA Mini loudspeaker array that the vast improvement in sound quality arrested his attention. “I was well aware of the Martin Audio brand, and when I heard this I was super-impressed. It had already been in our mind to upgrade, as I’d never been completely happy with the old system, and I felt this iconic venue deserved a proper system.” So he started looking seriously at Martin Audio. “The first thing we bought was four LE200 wedge monitors - and that blew everyone away compared with what we had. So then we started talking to Martin Audio about upgrading FOH.”

Enter one of the manufacturer’s partner companies, Solotech. Their project manager Louis Williams was happy specifying the brand knowing that “around 60% of our venues” have been equipped with Martin Audio. “We removed an old flare rig and put in a pair of FlexPoint FP15s, left and right of the stage, and a pair of SX218 double 18” subs. “We’re also using FP8 for the sidefill to give the door area a bit more coverage.” A further three more FP8 can be found outside “to give the smokers some nice sound as well”. The main system is powered by a pair of Martin Audio VIA5002 amplifiers with all signal routing and EQ managed via a dedicated Martin Audio DX4.0 processor. Williams is convinced that this was the correct specification. “FlexPoint loudspeakers are a perfect match for the venue,” he says. “They are the right size and at a great price point. It’s a massive improvement to what they had before.”

James Beck agrees. “The new system has been like night and day. Bands have noticed the improvement, customers and engineers have been super happy. The headroom in the system, the size of the boxes and clarity are all absolutely amazing. “With acts starting out, touring acts, and the odd superstar like Ronnie

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Wood rolling in it was important for us to have a really good sound system. It also needed something that was durable because we have acts seven nights a week. When people come to a venue that’s been going for 60 years, they expect a good time which is why we needed something that would fulfil that, sound wise. “FlexPoint sounded great straight out of the box, and fulfils all the criteria.”

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